



THE ADVOCATE

Volume 7 No. 3

A Communication for Members of the Aurora Education Association

January, 2009

“BUILDING A NATION OF READERS”

Ready to help celebrate the birthday of the most famous children’s author? On March 2nd Association members across the nation will participate in hundreds of reading activities to celebrate reading and the one hundred fourth birthday of Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss.

In 1997 NEA launched it’s first Read Across America celebration, and eleven years later it has become the largest event characterized by adults and children reading together.

This year, as in the past, AEA is encouraging AEA members to participate in Read Across America by offering 10 grants of \$100 each to members who plan and carry out reading events with their class or school.

How can you be the recipient of one of these grants? It’s very easy. First decide on the activity or event you would like to

propose in celebration of Read Across America. Then visit the AEA website at www.auroraea.org and click on the Read Across America link on the left panel. Download the application, tell us about your celebration and email or fax your ideas to Becky McGurk, RAA Chair. That’s all you have to do. In mid February grant recipients will be announced.

Not sure where to begin? We want to encourage your creativity....this year’s theme, “Building a Nation of Readers” might give you some ideas. And don’t hesitate to visit the Read Across America link on the NEA website, www.nea.org. Click on Create a Reading Event, or Activity Ideas, and you will find suggestions for events and activities....feel free to borrow ideas!

So grab your hat....that would be a red and white stovepipe and join us for the celebration because “you’re never too old, too wacky, too wild to pick up a book and read to a child.”



SAVE THE DATE!!

The AEA ELA Caucus has received their second NEA grant in two years to support ELA professional development.

We want to give you advance notice of one of the upcoming professional development opportunities they will be offering.

Save the date for.....

“Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps for English Language Learners”

There will be two Saturday sessions: January 31 and February 21, 8:00- 3:00.

Sessions will be held at Virginia Court Elementary. Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided.

This professional development will be available for 1 hour of CDE credit or Adams State credit for \$45.

Please contact Rosana Trujillo at rrtrujillo@aps.k12.co.us, or Linda Bay ldbay@aps.k12.co.us, for additional information and to reserve your spot in the class.

“I CAN DO IT” OFFERED IN MARCH

In desperate need of some new strategies to manage your classroom? Looking for ideas to get students to transition quickly from one activity to another? Curious about why your communication style doesn't seem to connect with your students? Have we got the class for you. AEA will be offering I Can Do It, the classroom management course developed by NEA.

I Can Do It was originally developed for teachers in their first five years of teaching, but we have found that all teachers regardless of how many years they have been teaching find that they learn something valuable that they can use in their classroom.

I Can Do It will be offered on March 21st at the CEA Headquarters, from 8-4. AEA members can register at no charge. Participants will receive a notebook full of strategies and ideas, have the opportunity to dialogue with their colleagues about how to manage student behavior, and the best ways to address the classroom management challenges. One semester hour credit is available through Adams State for \$45.00.

For more information check out the AEA website at www.auroraea.org or contact Cathy Wildman at bcwildman@aps.k12.co.us. Registration deadline is March 6th.

Article 13—Teacher Plan Time Q & A

We are reproducing the information on Article 13 because questions continue to surface about plan time and how much time teachers have for their plan time, and what amount of time principals can direct. Below are some questions and answers which will hopefully address questions we have received about what activities can be expected to occur during the 30/70 split of student noncontact time. Our intent in this language was to ensure that teachers have the time they need during the duty day to be prepared to offer quality instruction to their students while allowing for all the other “time” requirements during the duty day.

Q: Is there a general rule of thumb for what counts in a principal's 30% and what doesn't?

A: If the principal is requiring an activity, and there is a consequence for not participating, the event should count in the principal's 30%. If the principal is recommending, suggesting, or encouraging participation in an activity, but it's up to the teacher to decide, and there is no consequence for not participating, the event does not count in the principal's 30%.

Q: If participating in a CCL group is a requirement in my building, and there are required readings as part of the CCL, shouldn't the needed reading time be part of my principal's 30%?

A: Unless other accommodations are made for required reading time as part of required CCL participation, yes, the reading time should count in the principal's 30%. Principals should determine a specific number of minutes they believe the reading should require and include those minutes in their weekly 30% calculation. If principals do not want to count reading time as part of their 30%, some accommodations might be:

- 1) work with the DOI's Professional Learning department to offer credit for professional reading to be completed outside of the duty day (similar to book studies), or
 - 2) don't require the reading.
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Q: My principal asks us to participate on at least one committee each year. If the committee meets during

the duty day, shouldn't that count toward the principal's 30%? If the committee meets after the duty day, shouldn't that come from the time allowed by Article 13, section 16 and 17?

A: To answer this question, it's important to be clear on whether the principal is "asking" or "requiring." Principals can and do ask teachers to be involved in the activities of the school beyond the classroom. However, if the participation is not required, and there is no consequence for not doing so, the principal does not need to count the activity as part of their 30%. If the participation is required, and there is a consequence for not participating, the activity should count in the principal's 30%, or should come from the time allowed in Article 13, section 16 or 17.

Q: My principal requires attendance at data team, vertical team and grade level team meetings. Where does the time for these meetings come from?

A: If a principal requires attendance at any meetings during the duty day, and teachers don't have the option of not attending the meetings regardless of their nature, the time must come from the principal's 30% for that week.

Q: What can teachers choose to do during the 70% of noncontact time?

A: The 70% of weekly teacher noncontact time can be used by teachers to complete any work related to their job. This can include planning for instruction, contacting parents, returning emails, organizing materials and their classroom and meeting with colleagues at their discretion. Teachers are not required to attend meetings unless they choose to do so regardless of who schedules the meeting if it occurs during the teachers' 70% of noncontact time.

Q: Where does the time for SPED staffings, Evaluation pre and post conferences, Student Intervention team meetings or similar kinds of meetings come from?

A: Since these events are part of the professional responsibilities of individual teachers, the time for these meetings would come from the teachers 70% of noncontact time.

From the Master Agreement—Article 13 Teacher Duty Day



Article 13 of the Master Agreement establishes the duty day and teaching hours for APS teachers. Some highlights from this Article follows.

*The duty day for teachers at all levels is 8.0 hours inclusive of at least a 30 minute duty free lunch.

*The duty day is to be one continuous period of time unless

agreed to by the teacher involved.

*The student contact time for all teachers cannot exceed 30 hours per week including passing time.

*Elementary teacher have 90 minutes of daily non-contact time immediately preceding or following the instructional day in blocks of time no less than 30 minutes.

*In consultation with the Building Council, individual elementary schools may decide to change the blocks of noncontact time before or after the duty day to less than 30 minutes.

*Principals may require attendance at meetings or inservice activities during the student non-contact time for no more than 30% of any teacher's student non-contact time per week.

*Teachers have 70% of the student non-contact time per week to use at their determination. Teachers cannot be directed to attend meetings by anyone during this time.

*Principals can require teacher attendance at meetings held contiguous to the duty day for 1 hour once a month.

*Principals can require teachers to attend up to a total of 6 two hour instructional or informational meetings, and/or parent or school-related community meetings per school year. These meetings do not have to be held contiguous to the duty day. The time cannot be separated into 12 one hour meetings however.

*Principals can schedule up to four meetings outside of the duty day for the purpose of parent-teacher conferences. These meetings should not exceed three and three quarters hours each. For every seven and one half hours of conference time held outside the duty day, teachers will be compensated by the elimination of one teacher duty day per year.

*There are four workdays, one at the end of each quarter. The primary purpose for workdays is to provide time to complete report cards. Teacher workdays are to be teacher directed.

AEA Negotiations Team

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The Aurora Education Association is the exclusive representative for all teachers full and part-time hired on contract in APS in matters involving collective negotiations with respect to wages, hours and other conditions of employment.

The mission of the Aurora Education Association is to empower licensed educators to advocate for students and themselves in order to provide quality education, professional excellence and economic security.

Our vision is to be an exemplary organization working together as powerful professionals. Through solidarity we are a collaborative and proactive Association. We are unified by our strengths and commitment to advocacy for children and to empower our members.

AEA is an affiliate of the Colorado Education Association and the National Education Association.

